

# NEWS RELEASE



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 26, 2015

Aziza Jackson  
Public Information Officer  
City of Anniston  
Office: (256) 231-7722  
Cell: (256) 689-5479  
ajackson@anniston.al.gov

## Anniston selected as 2015 Official Arbor Day City

The Alabama Urban Forestry Association has selected the City of Anniston as the Official Arbor Day City for 2015, a recognition given to one community each year that serves as an example to others by planning, planting, managing and celebrating their urban forest resources.

The City will celebrate this recognition at its Arbor Day celebration that will be held from noon to 2 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 27 at Zinn Park in Historic Downtown Anniston.

"It is indeed an honor for the City of Anniston to be singled-out amongst all the other municipalities in the state as the Official Arbor Day City for 2015," said Mayor Vaughn Stewart.

"Anniston's long-term healthy relationship with trees and our urban forests date back to the city's founding over a century ago. Recognizing the important role that trees play in the sustainability of communities, Anniston's co-founder Sam Noble oversaw the purchase, planting and cultivation of 100,000 oak trees. Many of these trees still stand today in Anniston's parks and along its corridors, enhancing the quality of life as well as health and wellness for all citizens."



Pictured: AUFA Arbor Day Coordinator David West (left) and Anniston Mayor Vaughn Stewart (right)

Friday's Arbor Day celebration will be held in partnership with the Calhoun County Extension System and include a presentation on the history of Anniston's trees.

David West, AUFA Arbor Day Coordinator, will present a proclamation from Gov. Robert Bentley recognizing the City's designation as the Official Arbor Day City.

“Trees improve our communities by increasing property values, providing homes for wildlife, improving our quality of life and providing needed shade,” said Russell Stringer, president of the Alabama Urban Forestry Association.

“The City of Anniston has an exemplary Urban Forestry program that citizens should be proud of.”

For over 20 years, Anniston has held the title of “Tree City USA,” a distinction given to cities, large and small, across the nation that have committed to investing in their trees.

It is because of this recognition and the City’s dedication to providing all citizens with an environment conducive to growth and prosperity that single tree seedlings will be given away to local residents at Friday’s celebration.

The seedlings have been donated by Alabama Power and the U.S. Forestry Service and will include: crepe myrtles, dogwoods, river birch, oak, maple, and cherry trees.

Master gardeners from the Calhoun County Beautification Board will also be on hand to answer questions regarding proper care and maintenance for their seedling trees.

The Anniston City Council and the city’s Parks and Recreation Department will also plant willow oak trees at schools across the city at a later date.

“This living legacy has been passed on to a new generation of Annistonians who are charged today to raise the public awareness of the importance of smart conservation and stewardship of these valuable assets,” said Stewart.

#### **The City of Anniston**

Located in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains in northeast Alabama, Anniston sits as the county seat for Calhoun County and a regional hub for legal, medical, and banking services. Home to the bronze-level mountain bike ride center of Coldwater Mountain, Anniston offers a wide range of recreational options such as biking the Chief Ladiga Trail or visiting the Anniston Museum of Natural History. For more information about the City of Anniston, visit [anniston.al.gov](http://anniston.al.gov).

#### **The Alabama Urban Forestry Association**

The Alabama Urban Forestry Association was formed in 1990 by citizens and businesses interested in promoting urban tree planting and health in Alabama. The Association has partnered with the Governor’s Office since 2003 to recognize an official Arbor Day City or Community for Alabama. For information on how to apply to be the Official Arbor Day City for Alabama in 2016, please visit [www.aufa.com](http://www.aufa.com), or call David West, AUFA Arbor Day Coordinator, at (256) 237-1621.

#### **The Arbor Day Foundation**

Founded in 1972, the centennial of the first Arbor Day observance in the 19th century, the Foundation has grown to become the largest nonprofit membership organization dedicated to planting trees, with over one million members, supporters, and valued partners. For more information about the Arbor Day Foundation, visit [arborday.org](http://arborday.org).